



COMDTNOTE 6150
Sep 28 2004

COMMANDANT NOTICE 6150

CANCELLED: Sep 27 2005

Subj: CH-1 TO COAST GUARD / VETERANS AFFAIRS (VA) BENEFITS DELIVERY DISCHARGE PROGRAM (BDDP), COMDTINST 6150.1

1. PURPOSE. This Notice publishes CH-1 to the Coast Guard / Veterans Affairs Benefits Delivery Discharge Program, COMDTINST 6150.1.
2. ACTION. Area and district commanders, commanders of maintenance and logistic commands, commanding officers of the headquarters units, assistant commandants of directorates, Chief Counsel, and special staff offices at Headquarters, shall comply with the provisions of this Notice.
3. DIRECTIVES AFFECTED. None.
4. SUMMARY. Change Enclosure (2) paragraph 6-A-6 to read: Provide the Coast Guard service member's complete original military service medical record and copy of the member's DD-214 form to the VBARO Office not later than 7 calendar days following date of separation.
5. PROCEDURES. Remove and insert the following pages:

Remove

Insert

Encl (2)

Encl (2), CH-1

6. ENVIRONMENTAL ASPECT AND IMPACT CONSIDERATIONS. Environmental considerations were examined in the development of this change and have been determined to be not applicable.

PAUL J. HIGGINS /s/
Director of Health and Safety

Encl: (1) CH-1 to Coast Guard / Veterans Affairs Benefits Delivery Discharge Program,
COMDTINST 6150.1

DISTRIBUTION – SDL No 142.

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A	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		1	1		1	1	1	1	1	1		1		1					
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NON-STANDARD DISTRIBUTION:



COMDTINST 6150.1
AUG 18 2004

COMMANDANT INSTRUCTION 6150.1

Subj: COAST GUARD/VETERANS AFFAIRS (VA) BENEFITS DELIVERY DISCHARGE
PROGRAM (BDDP)

Ref: (a) Memorandum of Understanding/Agreement, COMDTINST 5216.18 (series)

- PURPOSE.** The purpose of this Instruction is to provide Coast Guard Commands with a template Memorandum of Agreement (MOA), to be entered into with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Regional Office and the nearest Veterans Affairs Medical Center (VAMC), to ensure timely processing of VA Disability compensation for Coast Guard members separating from active duty. The MOA will ensure separating Coast Guard members are provided with comprehensive benefits counseling, a complete medical examination, copies of all relevant Coast Guard medical records, and assistance in filing claims for VA benefits (to include a VA rating). **Eligible Coast Guard service members are those who have 180 days or less until separation, but not less than 90 days prior to start of terminal leave or date of separation, who wish to claim VA disability compensation.** The following members are excluded from participation in this program: those separating pursuant to a Physical Evaluation Board (PEB) or Medical Board action (i.e. IMB, CPEB, DMB, FPEB, PDAB); and those separating with an other than honorable conditions, i.e., bad conduct or dishonorable discharge.
- ACTION.** Area and district commanders, commanders of maintenance and logistic commands, commanding officers of the headquarters units, assistant commandants of directorates, Chief Counsel, and special staff offices at Headquarters, shall consult with local representatives of the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) to ensure the Benefits Delivery Discharge Program (BDDP) is available to separating and retiring Coast Guard members. Internet release is authorized.
- DIRECTIVES AFFECTED.** None.

DISTRIBUTION – SDL No 141.

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B	163	2	2	1	2	2	1	2	1	1	2	2	2	2	1	1	3	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
C	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	2	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		1
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NON-STANDARD DISTRIBUTION:

4. BACKGROUND. In 1994, the Department of the Army and the VA jointly initiated the Separation Examination Test. Their final report was published in September 1997 and demonstrated that the Department of Defense (DOD) and the VA could successfully perform a combined separation physical examination. Based on this result, Coast Guard units should pursue entering into a MOA with their nearest VA Regional Office and local VAMC to ensure rapid processing of disability compensation claims and vocational rehabilitation applications for Coast Guard personnel separating from the unit.
5. RESPONSIBILITIES.
 - a. Area and district commanders, commanders of maintenance and logistic commands, commanding officers of headquarters units shall:
 - (1) Contact the nearest Veterans Benefits Administration Regional Office (VBARO) and request that their units be provided BDDP services. Prior to receipt of services, enclosure (2) shall be signed by the participating parties (e.g. the Coast Guard District Commander, the Director of the VAMC, and the Director of the VBARO). **[Note: Advice should be obtained from legal prior to modifying the MOA. In addition, any modifications to the MOA contained in enclosure (2) must comply with reference (a).]**
 - (2) After signature (completion) of the MOA, disseminate information on the availability of the BDDP to those Coast Guard service members separating or retiring;
 - (3) Allow separating or retiring Coast Guard members time for benefits counseling and VA medical examination before registration with the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) representative;
 - (4) Provide the VBA representative with the separating or retiring Coast Guard member's dependency, retirement and/or severance pay information;
 - (5) Provide the enrolled member's original Coast Guard service health record (i.e. medical and dental records) and a copy of the Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty, DD Form 214 to the VBA Representative not later than 7 calendar days following date of separation or retirement. **(Note: Coast Guard members enrolling in the BDDP shall make a complete copy of their original service health record and present it to the VBA representative at the initial meeting for the assessment of the member's claim for disability. The VBA representative will use the copy for the initial claim assessment and then provide this working copy to the member prior to separation.);**
 - (6) Designate a Command point-of-contact (POC) for issues relating to the BDDP. They shall work together with the VBA representative and enrolled Coast Guard members to resolve any issues. In addition, the Command will:
 - (a) Provide the VBA representative adequate office space for counseling, telephone services and a locking file cabinet for holding active claims and health record material; and

- (b) Coordinate with the VBA representative to schedule the separating or retiring Coast Guard member's VBA counseling and physical examination;
- (7) Commands with health services clinics shall:
 - (a) Perform laboratory, x-ray, and other screening usually performed as Part 1 of the separation examination; and
 - (b) Provide the completed Report of Medical Exam, DD-2808, Report of Medical History, DD-2807-1, lab/test results, x-rays (when indicated) to the VBA representative.
- (8) Ensure that the separating or retiring Coast Guard member that is enrolling in the BDDP makes a complete copy of their original Coast Guard service health record (medical and dental) and presents it to the VBA representative at the initial meeting regarding the member's claim for disability. The VBA representative will use the member's copy of the original service health record for the assessment and adjudication of the member's claim for disability. The VBA representative will return the copy of the original Coast Guard health record to the member for keeping prior to separation or retirement; and
- (9) Ensure that the unit POC provides the VBA representative with the original Coast Guard service health record not later than 7 days after the member's separation or retirement for forwarding to the Veterans Regional Office (VRO) nearest their selected final home of record.
- b. At the time a Coast Guard member enrolls into the BDDP demonstration project, as delineated in the CG/VBA BDDP MOA (see enclosure (2) for additional details), the VBA representative shall:
 - (1) Provide Coast Guard members, not supported by a Coast Guard Clinic, with a comprehensive medical examination sufficient to meet the needs of both the Coast Guard and the VA. This examination will be conducted not sooner than 180 days prior to separation, but not later than 90 days prior to start of terminal leave or date of separation;
 - (2) Direct Coast Guard service members to return to their Command POC if unresolved problems are identified and provide a memo to the Command POC that identifies the reason for the member's return and remaining questions that require to be answered;
 - (3) Direct the nearest VA Medical Center to provide appropriate specialty consultations to further evaluate the Coast Guard service member's claim of disability.
 - (4) Provide transcribed examination results within 21 days following the last examination to the Command POC;
 - (5) Forward the original Coast Guard service health record and copy of the member's Certificate of release or Discharge from Active Duty, DD-214 to the VBARO nearest the member's selected final home of record (as stated in the Coast Guard member's pre-separation or retirement letter). (Note: Electronic notification of the original Coast Guard service health

record location will be provided to the VA Records Management Center, St. Louis, MO, for future locator service and retrieval purposes); and

(6) Appoint a VBA representative to assist the Command on all issues relating to the program.

c. As delineated in the CG/VBA BDDP MOA (see enclosure (2) for additional details), the Veterans Benefits Administration Regional Office (VBARO) shall:

- (1) Participate in scheduled pre-separation events conducted at the separation site [e.g. Transition Assistance Program (TAP) workshop orientations, pre-separation and pre-retirement briefings];
- (2) Provide counseling services, to include: VA benefits information, claims assistance, and scheduled office hours at the separation site, to separating Coast Guard members within 90 – 180 days of release from active duty;
- (3) Provide necessary services to begin vocational rehabilitation process for eligible separating service members;
- (4) Prepare a formal rating decision, an award or disallowance of benefits, and written notification to the separating Coast Guard service member within 15 days of receipt of the Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty, the DD-214, the completed medical records and associated paperwork; and
- (5) Appoint a POC to coordinate the role of the VBARO in implementation and conduct of the Pre-Discharge Examination Program.

6. OTHER PROVISIONS. Point of contact for policy issues concerning this Instruction is G-WKH at (202) 267-0748.
7. ENVIRONMENTAL ASPECT AND IMPACT CONSIDERATIONS. Environmental considerations were examined in the development of this Instruction and have been determined to be not applicable.
8. FORMS/REPORTS. Forms DD-2808, Report of Medical Examination, and DD-2807-1, Report of Medical History, are controlled by the Department of Defense (DOD). These forms are available at: <http://web1.whs.osd.mil/icdhome/forms.htm>.

P. J. HIGGINS /s/
Director of Health and Safety

- Encl:
- (1) List of Acronyms Used in the CG/VA MOA
 - (2) Memorandum of Agreement among United States Coast Guard, Veterans Benefits Administration Regional Office [Template]

MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT
AMONG
UNITED STATES COAST GUARD, [UNIT ADDRESS]
VETERANS BENEFITS ADMINISTRATION REGIONAL OFFICE
[INCLUDE CITY, STATE]
AND
VETERANS AFFAIRS MEDICAL CENTER
[INCLUDE CITY, STATE]

SUBJECT: MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT FOR THE BENEFITS DELIVERY
DISCHARGE PROGRAM

1. PURPOSE. To establish the responsibilities and procedures of the U.S. Coast Guard, and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Regional Office and the Veterans Affairs Medical Centers (VAMC) to enable the VA to rapidly process disability compensation claims and vocational rehabilitation applications received from Coast Guard personnel separating from U.S. Coast Guard Units. This procedure is designed to also eliminate unnecessary patient visits and improve access to needed evaluations for beneficiaries.
2. OBJECTIVE. To identify Coast Guard service members about to be separated, provide them with comprehensive benefits counseling, assist them in filing claims for VA benefits, obtain all relevant Coast Guard medical records, provide them with a complete medical examination, and process the VA application(s) for benefits (to include a rating) before they separate from active duty.
3. AUTHORITY. This agreement is authorized under the provisions of 14 U.S.C. § 93 (u), which allows the Coast Guard to enter into cooperative agreements with other Government agencies.
4. BACKGROUND. In 1994, the Department of Army and the VA jointly initiated the Separation Examination Test. The final report was published in September 1997 and demonstrated that Department of Defense (DoD) and the VA can successfully perform a combined separation physical examination. Based on experience, one separation physical examination for service members should fulfill the requirements of the U.S. Coast Guard and the VA.
5. PARTICIPANTS. Eligible Coast Guard service members are those between six months and 90 days of separation or start of terminal leave who wish to claim VA disability compensation. The following members are excluded from participation in this program: those separating pursuant to a Physical Evaluation Board (PEB) or Medical Board action; and those separating with an other than honorable, bad conduct or dishonorable discharge.

SUBJECT: MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT FOR THE BENEFITS DELIVERY
DISCHARGE PROGRAM

6. RESPONSIBILITIES.

a. The U. S. Coast Guard will:

- (1) Disseminate information on the availability of the BDDP to those service members separating through the U.S. Coast Guard Clinic.
- (2) Make separating Coast Guard service members available for benefits counseling and VA medical examination before registration with the VBA.
- (3) CG Commands with health services clinics attached will perform laboratory, x-ray, and other screening usually performed as Part 1 of the separation examination.
- (4) CG Commands with health services clinics attached will provide the completed DD-2808, DD-2807-1, lab/test results, and a copy of the military service medical records to the member for presentation to the VBA representative at the time of filing of claim for VA disability compensation.
- (5) Provide the VBA representative dependency, retirement and/or severance pay information.
- (6) Provide the Coast Guard service member's complete original military service medical record and copy of the member's DD-214 form to the Veterans Benefits Administration Regional Office no later than 7 calendar days following date of separation.
- (7) Provide adequate office space and medical records holding for the VBA representative.
- (8) Appoint a Command point-of-contact (POC) for medical and personnel issues relating to the program.

b. VA Medical Centers will:

- (1) Provide comprehensive medical examinations sufficient to meet the needs of both the United States Coast Guard and the Department of Veterans' Affairs. Examinations will be conducted not sooner than 180 days prior to separation, but not later than 90 days prior to start of terminal leave or date of separation.

SUBJECT: MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT FOR THE BENEFITS DELIVERY
DISCHARGE PROGRAM

- (2) The VA Medical Center will provide for specialty consultations when ordered by the VBA Representative to further evaluate the Coast Guard service member's claim of disability.
 - (3) Provide transcribed examination results within 21 days following last examination to the VBA.
 - (4) Direct Coast Guard service members to return to the Command POC if unresolved problems are identified and provide a memo to the Command POC that identifies the reason for return and remaining questions needing to be resolved.
 - (5) Appoint a VAMC POC to serve as representative on all issues relating to the program.
- c. Veterans Benefits Administration Regional Office will:
- (1) Participate in scheduled pre-separation events conducted at the separation site (e.g., Transition Assistance Program (TAP) workshop orientations, pre-separation and pre-retirement briefings).
 - (2) Provide counseling service with scheduled office hours at separation site to provide separating service members with VA benefits information and claims assistance within 90 – 180 days of release from active duty.
 - (3) Provide necessary services to begin vocational rehabilitation process for eligible separating service members.
 - (4) Prepare a formal rating decision, an award or disallowance of benefits, and written notification to the separating Coast Guard service member within 15 days of receipt of DD-214, completed medical records, and associated paperwork.
 - (5) Appoint a VBA POC to coordinate the role of the VBARO in implementing the BDDP.
7. OTHER PROVISIONS. A review and evaluation of the program will be conducted at six (6) months from the effective date of agreement and annually thereafter.
8. AGREEMENT. Nothing in this Agreement is intended to conflict with current law or regulation or the directives of the United States Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, Department of Veterans Affairs, or the Veterans Benefits Administration. If a term of this agreement is inconsistent with such authority, then that term shall be invalid, but the remaining terms and conditions of this agreement shall remain in full force and effect.

SUBJECT: MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT FOR THE BENEFITS DELIVERY
DISCHARGE PROGRAM

9. EFFECTIVE DATE. This agreement becomes effective upon signatures by all parties to the agreement, and remains in effect until terminated. The agreement may be modified with mutual consent of all parties. Any party may terminate the agreement upon 90 days written notification to the other parties.

APPROVED BY:

Commanding Officer, USCG [unit]

Veterans Affairs Medical Center
[insert address]

[insert name]
[insert rank]

[insert name]
Medical Center Director

DATE

DATE

Veterans Benefits
Administration
Regional Office, [insert address]

[insert name]
Director

DATE

List of Acronyms Used in the CG/VA MOU:

Acronym:	Definition:
BDDP	Benefits Delivery Discharge Program
CG/VBA BDDP MOU	Coast Guard/Veterans Benefits Administration Benefit Delivery Discharge Program Memorandum of Understanding
CPEB	Central Physical Evaluation Board
DoD	Department of Defense
FPEB	Formal Physical Evaluation Board
HSC	Headquarters Support Command
HSC (a-1)	Military Personnel Branch
HSC (k)	Chief, Clinical Services Division
HSC (k-1)	Medical Administrator
IMB	Initial Medical Board
PDAB	Physical Disability Appeals Board
PEB	Physical Evaluation Board
POC	Point of Contact
TAP	Transition Assistance Program
VA	Veterans Administration
VBA	Veterans Benefits Administration
VBARO	Veterans Benefits Administration Regional Office
VRO	Veterans Regional Office